1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

791 songs. His nephew went to stand behind him; his son went forward
796 to stand at the left shoulder of his cousin. These two boys joined in
533 the singing, repeating Landaeta's song stanza after stanza. A few women, led by Landaeta's wife and daughter, went to stand at his right side, and joined the boys in answering the songs of the shaman. They stood there in front of the pole singing until the Southern Cross hung high in the sky. Then Landaeta's wife took a gourd rattle from
534 the basket and gave it to her husband, who immediately began to
791 shake it, its liquid tone blending harmoniously with the voices. The
796 singers became more animated when they heard the rattle, and soon
535 they began to dance, jerking the body forward and backward, rhythmically and in unison. At times Landaeta would shake his rattle violently and his voice would betray his deep excitement. His wife from
[276] time to time would give a lighted cigarette to him, holding it to his mouth until it was consumed. At midnight the shaking of the rattle became more frequent and more violent, and finally, in the middle of one song, everyone began to move around the pole. The women put their right hands on the shoulder of the one ahead, and soon were running and stamping the right foot as they did so. The men formed an inner circle, dancing one behind the other. At the end of each song they paused for a moment lined up in their original positions. As the night wore on, both singing and dancing became more and more animated until the shaman appeared to be in a frenzy. His voice rose in pitch, his rhythm was faster, and more strongly accentuated, and all sang with greater feeling. The shaman danced in jerky movements, bending and twisting his body, half spinning about, first one way then the other, until he seemed to be quivering all over. The dance around the pole became almost a mad run, made more difficult by the soft sands and the complex movements of the body. The men would leap high and as the right foot was stamped in unison, a resonant beat was produced that seemed to blend with the pulsating roar of the howlers brought to us by the wind, and marked off by the rich rattling of the gourd and the choral singing. In the morning hours the wind rose again, blew more violently, and the roar of the monkeys became stronger, and the Yaruros sang passionately. It was then, when the morning star was already high, and dawn lighted the eastern horizon, that they stopped.

600 The sun awoke me, and though I had slept barely two hours I felt quite refreshed. I sat up to look about me. There was the vast stretch of sand, the fringe of jungle, and the sparkling river. My
513 Yaruros were sleeping half buried in the sand, behind basketry to
521 shelter themselves from the wind. The vultures were already at the
778 piles of refuse, feasting on crocodiles and turtles. Soon the sun awoke my friends, and they too sat up to gaze quietly at the western sky where they believe their gods live.

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773 "Here, a son-in-law will take care of me now!" Then the Yaruros
539 lived. The shaman had a nephew and a son. The nephew fell in love with his own sister and married—he was changed into a jaguar and she into a snake (?). If it had not been for this there would not have been any snakes and jaguars. Human beings should not marry their own sisters. It was ordered by Kuma. Animals are different.

Then one man found a tree with all the fruits on it. He did not tell the others. A white man appeared on horseback. Said he would come back in eight days. He came back in a boat. Scattered seeds everywhere. Thus he changed the country. Before it was all open savanna, but now forests and agricultural products grew.

India Rosa taught the women. God taught the men. God wanted to give the horse to the Yaruros, but they were afraid to mount, so he gave it to the Racionales instead.

KUMA

791 Presumably, Kuma is anthropomorphic. The only ones among
776 the Yaruros who have any knowledge of this mythical being who is re-
787 sponsible for the world are the shamans. These individuals are loath to discuss what they see in their dreams, claiming that all they have to say about such things are said during their shamanistic performances. Besides, they claim that they do not remember what they see during their trances.

531 Nevertheless, on the rattles appear graphic representations of what
776 Kuma is supposed to look like. In all cases, she seems to resemble
534 a human being, standing with her arms extended upward in greeting to her people. Such figures are represented on the gourd rattles shown in plate 24 and figures 25, 26, 27. It was explained that the lines
[301] appearing on the body of Kuma represent body painting and ornaments.

776 Of all the godheads or spirit forces of the Yaruros, Kuma is the most clear-cut. She is the creator of all things, and everything emanates from her. Her associates, Puaná, Itciai, and Hatchawa, function according to the laws of Kuma. Apparently they are not able to do anything without her consent, but occasionally she may be tricked. For instance, when Hatchawa decided to give fire to the people he threw a live fish into Kuma's fire. The wriggling of the fish scattered the coals, which the people seized and carried away.

Kuma is represented neither as an indulgent mother nor as an entirely benevolent creature in the myths. It is Hatchawa and Puaná who favor human beings. In fact, Kuma was opposed to peopling the earth with the human race. In spite of this there is no

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FIGURE 25.—Decorated gourd rattles of the shamans. *a, b, c, d*, Views of Landaeta's favorite instrument (rotating toward the left). *e, f, g, h*, Gourd rattle decorated by Landaeta after a night's shamanistic performance.

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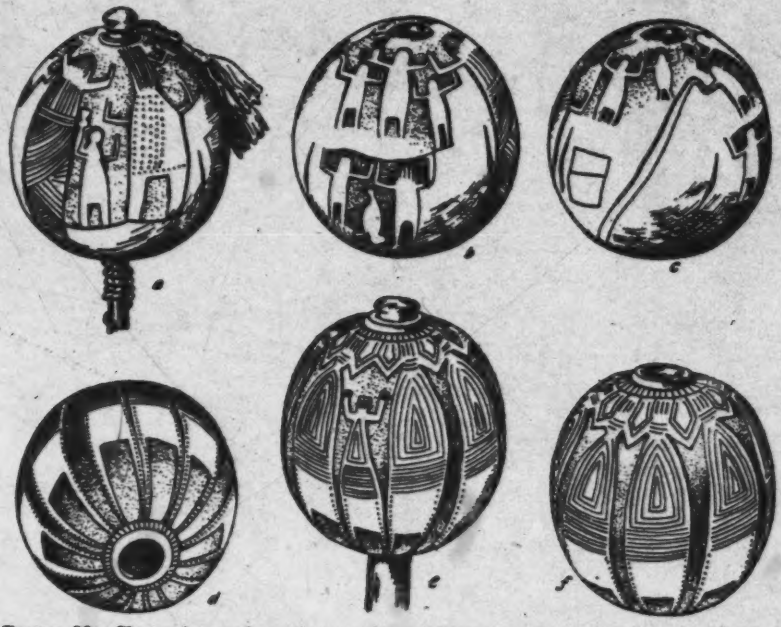

FIGURE 26.—Shaman's gourd rattles. *a*, *b*, *c*, Views of same instrument. *a*, The long figure on the left represents Puaná. The next figure on the right is Hatchawa, next to which is standing Kuma. *b*, The three figures at the top are, reading left to right, Hatchawa, Kuma, and Iticiai. At the extreme right can be seen Puaná. In the lower portion the figures represent the Yaruros, except the figure of the bird, symbolism of which remained undisclosed. *d*, *e*, *f*, Views of same rattle. The figures represent the Yaruros dancing around a pole. The small figure in *e* represents a child.

FIGURE 27.—Shaman's gourd rattles. *a*, *b*, *c*, Views of same instrument. *d*, *e*, *f*, *g*, Views of same instrument. *c* shows Kuma in the charhcteristic posture of greeting her people. *b* and *c* show Kuma dancing with her people. *d*, *e*, *f*, and *g* are views of the same rattle that show Kuma's people, the dead Yaruros, dancing in her land.

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535 791 with the stamping of the right foot on the off-beat, but whenever the shaman is giving a really good performance his whole body responds to the dance and he may shake as violently as the rattle in his hand. His people may also throw themselves into a dance, making a series of jerky movements, bending from the waist downward and up again.

533 539 One of the typical songs of Kuma was a greeting to me. She said:

> Greetings, man, greetings. Your wife is waiting. She is not dead, nor is she sick, but she is thinking that her husband has been away so long that perhaps he is dead. She is good and loves her husband who is sick, which is good. But it is good that he is with me (Kuma speaking) and with my people. He is a good man. He gives me a cigar. I shall give him a horse when he is born again in my (Kuma) land. I shall give him much silver when he is born again in Kuma Land. I love him, the good man, and I shall love him in my land. In the other land, my land, he gave me drink like you my people. Like you my people, everyone will come to my land, the Yaruro land.

FEMALE SHAMANISM

791 787 554 776 It proved impossible to learn much about those things in which the women are chiefly or exclusively interested. The shamans seem to be as influential among both sexes as the men are, and they seem to acquire their power and prestige through dreams or revelations in the same way as the male shamans do. In the case of the women it seems that India Rosa must appear in a dream rather than Kuma. In the legends it is India Rosa who taught the women the various arts and crafts, so in shamanism she is the chief spiritual power. During the day, both Kuma and India Rosa are pictured as resting in their hammocks. Because of that the women shamans sing sitting in their hammocks, swaying back and forth, during the day. Apparently it is believed that by imitating the picture of Kuma and India Rosa they can reach the two spiritual forces more easily. These shamans never perform at night, although they will sing with the male shaman when the latter is giving a performance.

535 791 534 The gourd rattle seems to be an instrument which only the shamans can use with immunity and as a means of conversing with Kuma. The women do not have these rattles. Their singing is done unaccompanied by any musical instrument or by any dancing. Dancing is performed only at night, when it is led by the male shaman.

609 123 The nature of the visions experienced by the female shamans remained unknown to me. As has been mentioned before, social intercourse between man and woman, unless closely related by blood or marriage, is prohibited. It is a social taboo which apparently is never violated and which no amount of bribery could break down. It seemed best to respect this custom, even though it were at the expense of remaining ignorant of many phases of Yaruro culture practiced by the women. So, in the case of shamanism, although the

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

in small pieces on the banks of the Capanaparo. It is about as hard to work as coal. It has much the same appearance. The carving tool is the ordinary knife which, in some cases, may be a broken matchete. Yet, with such crude implements, they are able to produce exquisite realistic carvings of birds, fish, and other animals. These are generally perforated and strung into a necklace. Each woman possesses at least a few of these carved figures, the number depending on the industry of her husband. No symbolical significance seems to be attached to either the painting, the carving, or to any of the designs appearing on the stamps. There may be some magical meaning to them, but all inquiries were answered in the negative.

The gourd rattles present an entirely different manifestation. In the first place, only the male shaman can use a rattle. It is, in fact, the badge of shamanism. All the designs appearing on the rattle represent what he sees during his visits to Kuma's land. These carvings are made with the point of any sharp instrument, which cuts in just deep enough to expose the lighter colored inner wood of the rattle.

To become a shaman one must dream of Kuma and the other gods, and show his people that he can communicate with the godheads when occasion demands. Perhaps looking at shamanistic practices objectively this may mean primarily that the would-be shaman has a fertile imagination and some artistic talent. I do not think that we ought to doubt that he believes that he actually sees and talks with Kuma, Itciai, and the rest of the spirit world.

He commemorates his dreams on the sacred rattle, carving out on its surface the figures which appear in his dreams. Kuma and Hatchawa dominate the decorations on the gourd rattles, and since those collected came from the Puaná moiety, Puaná is also portrayed. In plate 24 various views of one of these gourd rattles are shown. The large geometric figure dominating the first drawing represents Kuma; the smaller one Hatchawa. Rotating the rattle toward the left we discover Puaná, the Snake.

In connection with these rattles one of the most interesting aesthetic features is the filling in of space. All of the specimens collected and shown in figures 25, 26, and 27 demonstrate this. In watching Landaeta at work I asked him why he did so; his reply was that a properly decorated rattle must be "tsaimui", that is "good", "proper", "beautiful."

Music

One would suspect that the Yaruros would have borrowed some of the musical instruments employed by the Llaneros. Among the lat-

1[See Category 116, end plate 14 --- Analyst]
2[See category 116, pp. 242-243 --- Analyst]

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

534 177 ter the harp is very popular. Flutes and whistles are also made by the Llaneros, but the gourd rattle, which consists of a small gourd containing coarse grains of sand, or seeds, is the instrument employed by the Yaruro shaman. Music, therefore, is produced by singing to the accompaniment of the rattle if the singer happens to be the [512] shaman. Since the men are prohibited from singing and whistling during the daytime there is no freedom of expression in this way. During the entire time that I stayed with these people I never heard anyone begin a song except the shaman. Whenever, for purposes of recording, I asked some of the men to hum some of the tunes they refused to do so.

533 Although there are a variety of tunes, the music apparently consists of one phrase repeated four times for each stanza of the song. Each stanza is begun in a high falsetto. The second phrase is sung an octave lower, and the last phrase, therefore, is four octaves lower [462] than the first. The woman shaman, however, has a song slightly different than the male shaman's song and their pattern seems to begin at the lower end of the scale for each phrase and repeating each phrase in the same range as the first. In both cases, each phrase covers the entire scale of six notes. The tempo is 1–2 time, with the accent on the off-beat, but at the height of the ceremonies the songs are syncopated. The intensity of the songs, the melodious quality of the phrases, and the oral repetition produces an effect similar to the negro spirituals.

It is difficult, if not impossible, for one to sing in tune with the Yaruros. Their scale is different from ours and they seem to have quarter tones. In addition to this peculiarity, they never seem to sing in a full voice, not in a falsetto, but in a style of their own, difficult for one trained in European music to master quickly. Of course the theory is that it is the gods and the ancestral spirits who composed both the music and the words and the people singing behind the shaman merely imitate these inspired songs.

533 535 The Yaruros have only one word to signify dancing and singing: "tohiwahimerekidi". The shaman, who is the leader in both these arts, is called "dancer" or "singer." In actual practice dancing is subordinate to singing, much as gesturing is subordinate to speaking among ourselves. Perhaps the correct translation of this word would be closer if rendered as "singing."

Dancing as an independent art does not exist. When it is practiced it is almost an outflow of singing. Singing may be done without dancing but dancing without singing is impossible. Every dancer sings, though every singer does not necessarily dance.

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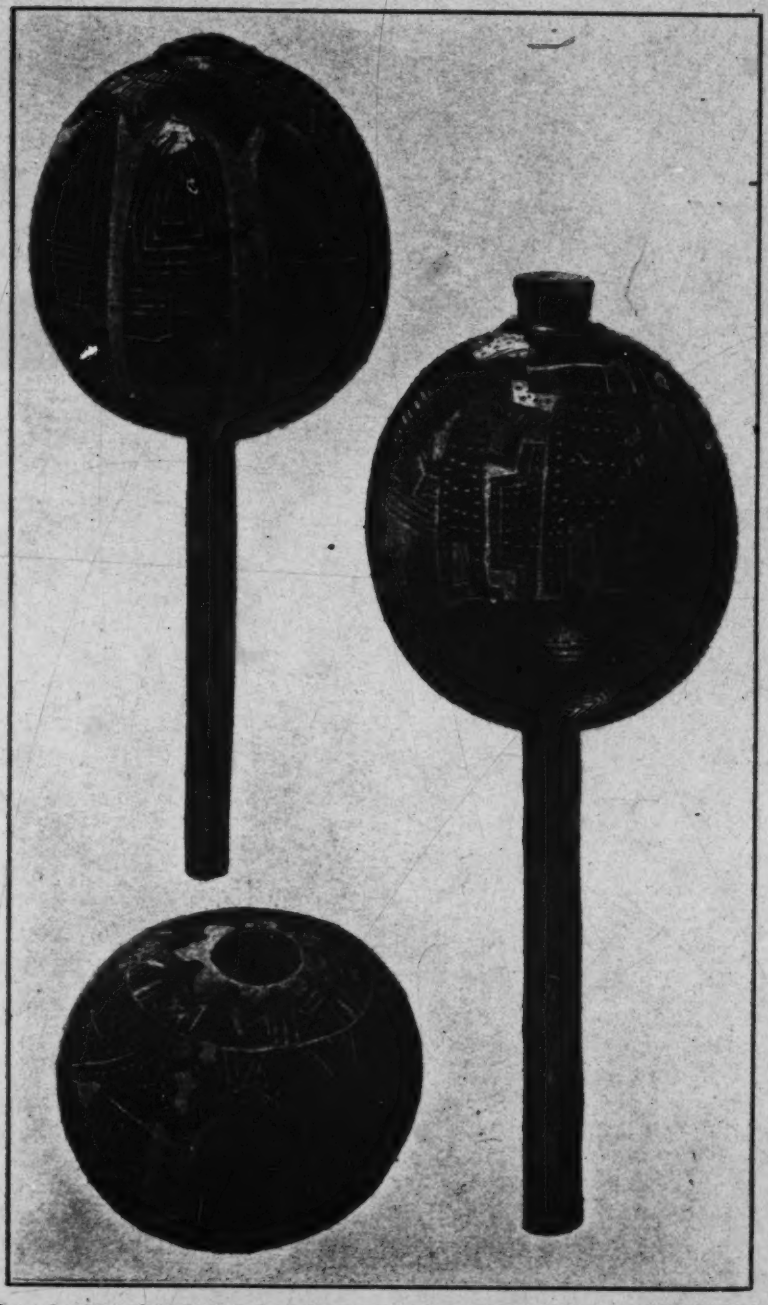

Shaman's rattles. Only the male shamans use gourd rattles. They are always decorated with etched representations of mythological figures which the shaman "sees" during his trances and dreams.

(End Plate 19)